

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An insulated shipping container comprising:

(a) an outer box;

(b) an insulated insert, said insulated insert being slidably removably disposed within said outer box; and

(c) an inner box, said inner box being slidably removably disposed within said insulated insert.

2. The insulated shipping container as claimed in claim 1 wherein said outer box is made of a material selected from the group consisting of corrugated fiberboard and corrugated plastic.

3. The insulated shipping container as claimed in claim 1 wherein said inner box is made of a material selected from the group consisting of corrugated fiberboard and corrugated plastic.

4. The insulated shipping container as claimed in claim 1 wherein each of said outer box and said inner box is made of a material selected from the group consisting of corrugated fiberboard and corrugated plastic.

5. The insulated shipping container as claimed in claim 4 wherein said outer box is shaped to define a rectangular prismatic cavity bounded by four rectangular side wall, four top closure flaps and four bottom closure flaps.

6. The insulated shipping container as claimed in claim 5 wherein said inner box is shaped to define a rectangular prismatic cavity bounded by four rectangular side walls and four bottom closure flaps, the top end of said inner box being open.

7. The insulated shipping container as claimed in claim 1 wherein said insulated insert comprises a foamed polymer body shaped to define a rectangular prismatic cavity bounded by four rectangular side walls and a bottom wall, said foamed polymer body having an open top end.

8. The insulated shipping container as claimed in claim 7 wherein said insulated insert further comprises a flexible, un-foamed polymer bag integrally bonded to said foamed polymer body along said rectangular prismatic cavity, said open top end and said four rectangular side walls.

9. The insulated shipping container as claimed in claim 8 wherein said flexible, un-foamed polymer bag has a generally uniform width over its length.

10. The insulated shipping container as claimed in claim 9 wherein said generally uniform width of said flexible, un-foamed polymer bag is sized to be approximately equal to the outer dimension of said foamed polymer body.

11. The insulated shipping container as claimed in claim 10 wherein said flexible, un-foamed polymer bag is a unitary member having a transverse seam at one end thereof and a pair of longitudinal creases extending from opposite ends of said transverse seam.

12. The insulated shipping container as claimed in claim 11 wherein said flexible, un-foamed polymer bag is formed by sealing one end of a generally tubular member to itself with a transverse seam and forming a pair of longitudinal creases on opposite ends of said transverse seam.

13. The insulated shipping container as claimed in claim 11 wherein said flexible, un-foamed polymer bag is made of a material selected from the group consisting of hexene and polyethylene.

14. The insulated shipping container as claimed in claim 1 wherein said inner box has an open top end, said insulated shipping container further comprising a closure member snugly, but removably, disposed within said open top end of said inner box.

15. An insulated shipping container comprising:

(a) a foamed polymer body shaped to define a rectangular prismatic cavity bounded by four rectangular side walls and a bottom wall, said foamed polymer body having an open top end; and

(b) a flexible, un-foamed polymer bag integrally bonded to said foamed polymer body along said rectangular prismatic cavity, said open top end and said four rectangular side walls, said flexible, un-foamed polymer bag having a generally uniform width over its length.

16. The insulated shipping container as claimed in claim 15 wherein said generally uniform width of said flexible, un-foamed polymer bag is sized to be approximately equal to the outer dimension of said foamed polymer body.

17. The insulated shipping container as claimed in claim 16 wherein said flexible, un-foamed polymer bag is a unitary member having a transverse seam at one end thereof and a pair of longitudinal creases extending from opposite ends of said transverse seam.

18. The insulated shipping container as claimed in claim 16 further comprising an outer box made of corrugated fiberboard, said outer box defining a cavity shaped to removably slidably receive the combination of said foamed polymer body and said flexible, un-foamed polymer bag integrally bonded to said foamed polymer body.

19. The insulated shipping container as claimed in claim 16 further comprising an inner box made of corrugated fiberboard, said inner box being removably slidably received within said prismatic rectangular cavity of said foamed polymer body covered by said flexible, un-foamed polymer bag.

20. A method of making an insulated shipping container, said method comprising the steps of:

providing a machine including:

a base portion with an internal cavity, an upper surface, and a source of vacuum connecting to said internal cavity;

a plug member disposed upon said upper surface;

a peripheral array of holes circumscribing said plug member and opening through said upper surface to said internal cavity of said base portion;

an array of cooperative wall members associated with said base portion, said wall members in a first position opening away from one another to leave said plug member exposed upon said base portion, said wall members closing together on said base portion to a second position in which said wall members engage one another and cooperatively define an enclosure surrounding said plug member in spaced relation thereto;

said cooperative wall members each having a respective top edge spaced from said base portion, and a lid member cooperating with said wall members to substantially close said enclosure;

providing a corrugated fiberboard box having an open end and a closed end;

positioning said corrugated fiberboard box in an inverted manner over said plug member with said closed end of said corrugated fiberboard box in contact with the top of said plug member;

providing an elongated plastic bag having an open end and a closed end;

positioning said elongated plastic bag over said corrugated fiberboard box in an inverted manner, with said closed end of said elongated plastic bag in contact with the closed end of said corrugated fiberboard box, and drawing the remainder of said elongated plastic bag over the top of the base member and the inside surfaces of the cooperative wall members, with the open end of said elongated plastic bag inverted over the top edges of the cooperative wall members, thus creating an annular recess around said corrugated cardboard box;

injecting foaming polymer material into said annular recess;

closing said annular recess with a lid while allowing said foaming polymer material to foam; and

allowing said foaming polymer material to cure.

21. The method as claimed in claim 20 wherein said elongated plastic bag has a generally uniform width over its length.

22. The method as claimed in claim 20 further comprising after said annular recess creating step and before said injecting step the steps of tearing said elongated plastic bag around its perimeter at a location covering said corrugated fiberboard box, removing the closed portion of the torn elongated plastic bag and securing the remainder of the torn elongated plastic bag to the corrugated fiberboard box.

23. The method as claimed in claim 22 wherein said elongated plastic bag is provided with perforations to facilitate tearing.

24. An insulated shipping container made according to the method of claim 22.